



## Herefordshire Council creates dynamic and engaging primary school environment with audio-visual technologies



### Customer agenda

- Continuous Improvement/Innovation
- Risk Avoidance

### Services

- Product Fulfilment Service
- Video Collaboration

### Technology

#### Software:

Promethean ActivExpression

#### Hardware:

Promethean Active +2 interactive whiteboards, Sanyo projector, Sahara audio equipment

### Customer challenge

When Herefordshire Council brought together two previously separate schools under one roof as Riverside Primary School, it wanted to provide a purpose-built, state-of-the-art facility. However, with limited expertise in audio-visual technologies, it needed external help to implement 24 interactive whiteboards and design and install a flexible audio-visual solution for the school hall.

### Computacenter solution

Following a competitive tender, the council decided to partner with Computacenter. The company sourced and installed Promethean interactive whiteboards in the new school building and an audio-visual solution for the school hall based on a Sanyo projector and retractable screen housed in a ruggedised unit. Computacenter is also responsible for supporting the technologies on an ongoing basis.

### Results

Since Riverside Primary School opened, the school hall's audio-visual solution has been used to enhance assemblies, school productions and even discos. The combination of interactive whiteboards in every classroom and the multi-purpose school hall solution provide a flexible, dynamic and exciting environment for both teachers and pupils.

## Customer profile

### Pioneering shared resources for better council services

Herefordshire Council is the unitary authority responsible for one of the largest yet most sparsely populated counties in England. The council provides the full range of local government services from a number of directorates, including environment and planning, housing, health and social care and education and learning to the 180,000 people in the region.

Herefordshire Council works closely with NHS Herefordshire to share back-office functions and accommodation in order to deliver better public services in a more cost-effective manner.

The council and trust share a central ICT department, which is also responsible for providing support, advice and guidance to 81 local primary schools. Its role includes providing Internet connectivity, centralised web filtering and IT security, and ensuring that new technologies are procured according to government regulations.

## Business challenge

### Equipping a state-of-the-art primary school

To improve facilities for the 500 pupils of Hunderton Infant School and Hunderton Junior School, Herefordshire Council decided to amalgamate the two previously separate schools. With both located in aging 1950s buildings that were no longer fit for purpose, the council built a brand new facility to house the conjoined school, which is now known as Riverside Primary School.

The new building includes a nursery, music studio and classrooms with plenty of space for creative learning. The council also has equipped the school with a modern ICT infrastructure, including wireless connectivity.

To fulfil the requirements for the new school, the council needed to equip its 24 classrooms with interactive whiteboards. Phil Rees, Senior ICT Technical Architect for Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire, comments: "Across the county we have standardised on Promethean Activ +2 interactive whiteboards and Active Inspire software. The majority of teachers in the region are trained on the devices and plan their lessons around them, so providing reliable and highly available devices in every classroom is essential."

The council also needed to equip the school's multi-use hall with an audio-visual solution that would be suitable for numerous uses. "The school hall would be used for assemblies, indoor sports, discos and after-school meetings, so the audio-visual solution had to meet the needs of all these activities," comments Phil. "In particular, it needed to be ruggedised and robust to prevent damage during sporting activities."

Although the council had ICT expertise, it lacked the experience and market knowledge of specific audio-visual technologies and needed a partner to assist with the project.

“Computacenter played an important role in helping us to create a state-of-the-art primary school in which both teachers and pupils enjoy working.”

**Phil Rees**  
**Senior ICT Technical Architect**  
**Herefordshire Council and NHS**  
**Herefordshire**

## IT solution

### Robust and flexible audio-visual technologies

Following a competitive tender, Herefordshire Council decided to partner with Computacenter to deliver the audio-visual solutions for both the classrooms and the school hall. "The tender was split into two, but Computacenter won both parts due its low pricing, experience and innovative design for the school hall that met our wide range of requirements," comments Phil.

Although the school had tight timescales within which the technologies had to be installed, due to issues with the building contractors the council was uncertain of exactly when this would be until the last minute. However, with Computacenter's scale and access to resources, the equipment was delivered and implemented without disruption, on time and to budget.

Computacenter attended a number of meetings with both the building contractors and the architects in advance of the project to co-ordinate activities at the new school site. "Computacenter worked alongside other contractors to ensure appropriate load bearing measures were taken so the walls could support the weight of the whiteboards," comments Phil.

As the site was brand new and nearing completion, Computacenter's engineers had to work particularly carefully throughout the whiteboard deployments and use protective covering to prevent damage to the brand new walls and flooring.

The second part of the project was the design and implementation of a multi-use audio-visual solution for the school hall. Computacenter's solution incorporated a Sanyo projector and Sahara audio system housed in an industrial cage to prevent damage from stray footballs. It also included a retractable screen that folds away to clear the hall's sports equipment and ensure it is not accessible by children climbing monkey bars. Although the technology is concealed from view during sports activities, it is quickly and easily prepared for use.

Phil comments: "The design of the school hall solution had to take numerous factors into account, and Computacenter did a fantastic job of accommodating them all. Despite lots of ambient light and complex acoustics, the audio-visual system provides excellent image quality across the width of the room and sharp sound that can be heard right at the back of the hall. Computacenter also had an excellent understanding of the health and safety requirements."

Computacenter is now responsible for supporting both the interactive whiteboards and school hall solution under the warranty. This means the school has a single number to call if they experience any problems with the technology.

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Senior ICT Technical Architect  
Herefordshire Council and NHS  
Herefordshire

## Results

### A better environment for pupils and teachers

Since Riverside Primary School opened in December 2009, the audio-visual solutions have been used on an almost daily basis by the school's teachers with very few problems. "Primary school teachers don't want to be concerned with technology – they just need it to work when they want it," comments Phil. "Computacenter's solution and ongoing support has enabled us to meet this need."

As a result of the project with Computacenter, Herefordshire Council has been able to provide Riverside Primary School with:

**A flexible learning environment:** The school hall solution can be used for presentations, school productions and even to display graphics for school discos. By equipping every classroom – from nursery areas to key stage two – with standardised interactive whiteboards, the school can ensure continuity of learning and easily swap classrooms regardless of pupils' age.

**Simplified lesson preparation for teachers:** With reliable access to technology, Riverside Primary School's teachers can spend less time preparing materials and focus on creating interesting lesson plans.

**An enhanced learning experience:** Audio-visual technologies have become a key tool to keep even very young pupils engaged and inspired in order to maximise their learning success.

Phil comments: "Computacenter played an important role in helping us to create a state-of-the-art primary school in which both teachers and pupils enjoy working."

John Pritchard, ICT Enterprise Architecture Manager at Herefordshire Council, said: "We are extremely pleased to have provided a cost-effective solution which has provided a world class learning environment for the pupils and teaching staff of Riverside Primary School. Furthermore we have developed a templated approach which is scalable and will be reused not only by other schools in Herefordshire, but also potentially other local authorities and public services."

Due to the success at Riverside Primary School, Herefordshire Council is currently working on a number of further projects with Computacenter, which include implementing an audio-visual solution at a crematorium and equipping co-location meeting facilities that will be used by Herefordshire Council, NHS Herefordshire and the local police force.

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## More resources

To find out more about our audio-visual services, visit:

[www.computacenter.com/audio-visual](http://www.computacenter.com/audio-visual)

Read more customer case studies at:

[www.computacenter.com/case-study](http://www.computacenter.com/case-study)